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To these, the very word *antiquities* has a dry and musty look; it is bodied out in the form of a spectral old man, whose blood is frozen, poring over some old, rust-eaten weapon, or handling with idolatrous affection some crazy vessel, which they scarcely could bring themselves to touch. Or if they can fancy him unrolling old records, and attempting to decipher old characters, they regard him as a vision of the past, a being who has buried himself alive, and over whose mortal remains it is seemly and decent to draw the veil of forgetfulness. True, the study of antiquities may be rendered, in the hands of a couceited, a phlegmatic, or a stupid man, one of the most intolerable of all the intolerable things under the sun. But those who set no value on antiquities whatever, would pass over a plain strewn around with the remains and memorials of generations who "breathed three thousand years ago," without the slightest emotion; they would stand on the tombs of the illustrious dead, and never dream that if the dust of the valley could spring to life, the sounds which those hills reverberated in years of which scarcely a tradition remains, would again awaken the slumbering echo, and the wild solitude be once more peopled with human beings. But the other class of our readers to whom we alluded, run just into the opposite extreme. They know that Ireland is a storehouse of relics; they see the undoubted testimonials of former greatness in every corner of the island: but misled by prejudice and prepossession, they give ear to fables of the most ridiculous kind, and believe in the existence of individuals who only lived in the brains of chroniclers. Thus the one class think we give too much of our space to antiquities, the other too little; the one think we exceed all due limit, the other that we do not go far enough. In endeavouring to steer a middle course, to convince the sceptic and cure the fabulist, we have had to struggle with weakness and incredulity on the one side, and strongly-rooted prejudice on the other. If we ultimately succeed in establishing in the first class a taste, and a spirit, and a feeling, for the antiquities of the country, and in correcting and enlightening the taste and knowledge of the second, we will have effected some good; and we would recommend all our readers to pursue the subject with ardour, to assist in clearing away the mists which yet overhang the study, and thus endeavour to establish the history of Ireland on the firm basis of truth. And he has no true love of country who would not feel an interest in the discussion. Let him, if he is annoyed by the sight of, or the search after, antiquities, seek an American forest or an Australian waste, where throughout the vast region no memorial exists to indicate that aught but the pine tree or the stunted shrub has tenanted the soil since the retiring waters crept into the ocean. Let him at least not mock the guileless enthusiasm of those who cannot rest in a land covered with the memorials of the past, without curiously attempting to hold converse with the dead, and who anxiously inquire what kind of beings they were that have left behind them such palpable evidences of their existence and power. "Far from me, and from my friends," exclaims Dr. Johnson, on the island of Icolmkill, "be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."

This train of thought could be pursued to a considerable length, but we must recollect that it is for the Penny Journal this is written. We intended to have talked of Agriculture, of Astronomy, of Chemistry—to show that even a faint and not very accurate conception of the different branches of philosophy has a useful tendency, far above that species of dabbling in the classics, to which Irishmen of the lower and middle classes are partial, inasmuch as the one fills the mind with *ideas*, the other with *words*—but the subject can be resumed, if another opportunity may occur. In the meantime, let the dissemination of useful knowledge be the object of every friend of the country—none but the sycophant or the tyrant may dread the enlargement of the kingdom of intellect.

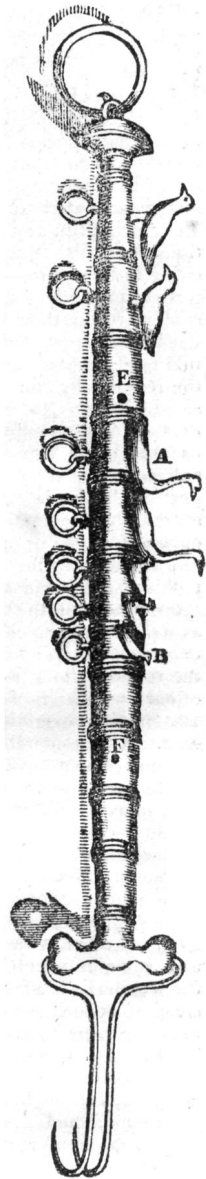
F.

ANCIENT IRISH INSTRUMENT

The very extraordinary piece of antiquity represented in the annexed wood-cut was found in a bog at Ballymoney, county of Antrim, and exhibited to the Royal Irish Academy by the Lord Bishop of Down, in March, 1829. Its material is that description of bronze of which all the ancient Irish weapons, &c. are composed, and its actual size is four times that of the representation. It is a tube, divided by joints at A and B into three parts, which, on separating were found to contain brass wire, in a zigzag form, a piece of which is represented in fig. G. This wire appears to have been originally elastic, but when found was in a state of considerable decomposition. At E and F are two holes, about one-eighth of an inch in diameter, and seem intended for rivets or pins to hold the instrument together. The birds move on loose pins, which pass through the tube, and on the other end are rings.

The material and style of workmanship of this singular instrument leave no doubt of its high antiquity. The Irish croziers of the sixth century are often ornamented with birds in this manner. But we confess ourselves totally unable to form even a rational conjecture as to its probable use, and should feel obliged to any antiquary who would throw light upon it.

P.



THE NORTHERN CLOCK.

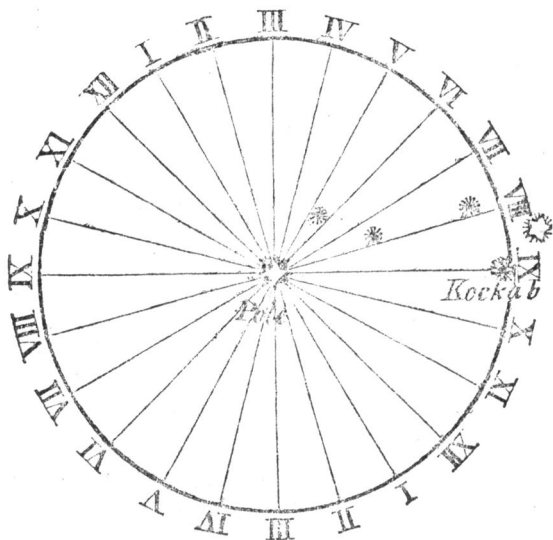
The power of calculating the revolutions of the different hours and seasons by observing the unchanging phenomena of nature, appears to be the earliest effort of the human intellect. An American Indian, who never heard what it is to solve Equations or invent Logarithms, and who has nothing to note the hour of the day, but the passing of the shadows from tree to rivulet, from hill to hill, and, lastly, from one Cordillera to another, as the sun sets over the land of his worshippers, can tell with more precision the period of the Equinoxes, and the Solstitial rains, than could be acquired by studying the Emyrean of Ptolemy or the Vortices of Descartes; and he reads in that book, whose pages lie open to every one, and whose language is intelligible to all, both laws for his agricultural prosperity and examples for his conduct. But this dependence on the guidance of nature, stops at a certain degree of civilization; men soon adopt a more artificial method of calculating the proper seasons for the different branches of husbandry than the rising and setting of the hyades; calculation is substituted for observation, and the appearance and departure of worlds can be determined by tracing a few figures on a sheet of paper. It has often been attempted, but as yet without much success—at least in

our hemisphere—to discover the hours of the night by the appearance of the constellations; an Irish peasant will affirm without hesitation, that he can tell you the time of the night by reading the stars, without being able to give a satisfactory explanation of the knowledge; which, in fact he does not possess. It is to him a maze, “without a plan,” nor can he perceive aught in the vast expanse, but that undefinable something, which speaks volumes of intelligible things to the human mind, learned or uninformed, and seems to be felt in some instances by the inferior beings of the creation. (It has been observed of geese. *Absit omen verbo*, that they are heard to utter their peculiar note at the termination of the different hours of the night. Query, is it their observations of the stars, that transforms them into watchmen?)

In the southern hemisphere, the natives of many countries are enabled to discover, with considerable accuracy the different watches of the night, by the position of the Cross; during the early hours, this constellation is nearly erect, becoming more inclined towards the horizon as the night advances. Humboldt describes the sensations he felt when passing over the vast silent Savannas of South America, he heard his Indian guide call out, for the first time—“It is past midnight, for the cross is reclined.” We have no celestial horologe in our Northern regions so conspicuous as the Southern Cross; but if attentively considered, the constellation of the Lesser Bear will be found to point out the passing of time equally well, though without so much clearness and brilliancy. This idea, was, I believe, for the first and only time, suggested in a little work, entitled, “*Relox del Norte*” or Northern Clock, published at Madrid, in 1757, and written by a Spaniard of the name of Hualde, where he shews by means of 24 diagrams, 2 for each month; the position of the Lesser Bear every third hour during the night.

The following abridged sketch may give some idea of the plan, and induce others, who have more learning and more ingenuity, to improve, and if possible, make it practicable.

If we make the polar star the immovable pivot on which the hand of the clock turns, and form that hand of the Lesser Bear, the Star Kockab forming the extremity of the hand, and as if pointing to the hours; we may then draw an imaginary circle round the whole, the pole star always being the centre, and inscribe on that circle the 24 hours which the hand of the clock is to traverse, so far the horologe is formed; now if we examine it on the night of the 15th of March, it will be in the following position:—



the next evening, at the same hour, we find Kockab the point of the hand, a little more westward, becoming gradually more so, till the middle of October, when it appears exactly in the opposite position, or at IX, on the west side of the diagram. To render this theory capable of adaptation, there is only required a constant habit of observing the hand of the clock at the same hour during the different months, it advancing about 2 hours every month,

and afterwards during the different hours of the same night which is the object of the clock; for instance if the Star Kockab, on the 15th of March, points to IX of the circle at nine o'clock in the evening, at ten o'clock it will be at the next division and so on in progression.

To the travellers both over sea and land, to all who are obliged to keep watch during the night, the northern clock might be rendered useful. But even if it is destined never to be more than a philosophical speculation, it is a subject on which a contemplative mind can dwell with pleasure. The imagination is interested with that vast celestial clock formed of suns and systems, turning for ever round the Pole, itself seeming eternal, but telling since the creation the passing of time, “*Cette image mobile de l'immobile Eternite*.” We are naturally inspired to reflect what are those suns? Where are those systems? that admonish the speck in the universe, which we inhabit, of the evanescence of all things that it contains; but here we feel that pride subduing sentence, before which all presumptuous theories fall back into their own nothingness, “*Hitherto shalt thou go and no farther*.” Z.

THE SEPARATION.

(From the German of Klopstock.)

FOR THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL.

“Geh! Ich reiz mich los, obgleich die manliche Tugend
Nicht die Thrane verbuet.”

Go! I stifle this intense affliction:—
Go, my friend!—Albeit a manly virtue
Never yet condemned a tear,
Yet, farewell! I will not weep, Ernestus:
Days,—years,—life itself must pass away in weeping,
Were I now to weep for thee.
For so all from all at last shall sever;
Each in turn departing from the remnant,
Leaving them to grief and gloom.
So divideth death life's newly-wedded!
He,—the young and headlong husband perished,
Struggling with the midnight wave;
She upon the shore, where tempest-voices
Shriek in chorus wild above her grave of
Wrecks and carcasses and weeds.
So, too, lie the scattered bones of MILTON,
Withering far away from HOMER'S ashes.
Through the cypress boughs that droop
O'er the sepulchre of each immortal
Die away their fitful underwailings,
Each a sad and separate dirge!
Thus did HE in Heaven engrave on marble
Silently the darkly over-curtained
And mysterious doom of man.
Prostrate in the dust before the Highest,
Prostrate in the dust I bow and worship,
Nor against His Wisdom weep.
Haste to HAGEDORN, my loved Ernestus,
Fly to him, and when thou hast embraced him,
When the burst of mutual joy
Yields to feelings of serener gladness,
Tell, oh! tell him how I also love him
With a love as warm as thine.

CLARENCE.

KING JAMES THE SECOND.

The wreath of laurel which this unfortunate monarch won by sea was lost by land. Having been a spectator of the battle of the Boyne, on the 1st of July, 1690, he thought it most prudent, while the fate of the day was yet undecided, to seek for safety in flight. In a few hours he reached the Castle of Dublin, where he was met by Lady Tyrconnell, a woman of spirit. “Your countrymen, (the Irish) Madam,” said James, as he was ascending the stairs, “can run well.” “Not quite so well as your Majesty,” retorted her ladyship, “for I see you have won the race. Having slept that night in Dublin, he rode the next day to Waterford, a distance of two hundred English miles, in the space of twenty-four hours. On his arrival in that city, he went immediately on board a ship that lay ready for him in the harbour, in order to carry him to France. As he was passing along the quay a sudden gust of wind carried off his hat, and, as it was night,